

REMARKS

Applicant submits this Amendment with a Request for Continued Examination, which withdraws the appeal of the above application. This Amendment addresses two issues raised by the Examiner in the Examiner's Answer mailed April 20, 2005.

First, the Examiner has identified the ring 31 of Smith as the "plate" recited in the claims. Applicant has amended Claims 28 and 32, the only independent claims in the application, to recite that the plate has a plurality of bolt holes as well as an opening. Thus, the present claims now recite a one-piece plate which includes both bolt holes and an opening. Such bolt holes are clearly shown in the drawings (see Figure 5C, for example), and described in the specification (see page 6). Thus, no new matter has been added.

Claims 28 and 32 now define structure which more clearly distinguishes the invention from Smith. In Smith, the bolt holes are provided by locator 41, not by the ring 31. Smith clearly does not teach a one-piece plate which defines both a central opening for fluid flow, and bolt holes for mounting the plate to a port face.

Secondly, in responding to Applicant's argument concerning Jones, the Examiner has held that the claims do not clearly define the directions of fluid flow in the orifice and through the opening. Claims 28 and 32 have been amended to recite that the opening formed in the plate comprises a path for fluid flow which is perpendicular to the plate. Since both claims also recite that the orifice has a longitudinal axis which is generally parallel to the surfaces of the plate, it follows that both claims now require that the fluid in the orifice must flow along a path that is

perpendicular to the fluid flow through the opening.

In summary, the claims now define a structure which is distinct from Smith. Moreover, the combination of Smith and Jones does not yield the present invention, as currently claimed. Therefore, Applicant submits that all of the claims are allowable over Smith and Jones.

Applicant also incorporates by reference the arguments made with respect to Jones, in the previous amendments and in the appeal brief. Those arguments are believed valid for the reasons given in Applicant's brief.

For the reasons given above, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicant requests entry of this Amendment, and early allowance of this application.